

Will the broadcast flag interfere with consumers ability to make copies of DTV content for their personal use, either on personal video recorders or removable media?

Government should propose regulations, nit the technical means for implementing them. Fair use is a long-established right and should not be abridged. There is a large cross-involvement between content creation and distribution companies and consumer electronics companies (Sony leaps to mind). If they have the means, they will use it to restrain fair use.

Would the digital flag interfere with consumers ability to send DTV content across networks, such as home digital networks connecting digital set top boxes, digital recorders, digital servers and digital display devices?

I am in the process of networking my home for the explicit purpose of distributing digital content. I am not sanguine about assurances that any content-flagging scheme would not impede the use of this network.

Would the broadcast flag requirement limit consumers ability to use their existing electronic equipment (equipment not built to look for the flag) or make it difficult to use older components with new equipment that is compliant with the broadcast flag standard?

If the flag would not limit the use of current equipment, then exactly what is it it would do? Would ownership of non-flag-sensitive equipment become illegal?

Would a broadcast flag requirement limit the development of future equipment providing consumers with new options?

Any specification of explicit technological solutions will hinder further development. Regulation should address policy, intent, and actions-- not specific technology.

What will be the cost impact, if any, that a broadcast flag requirement would have on consumer electronics equipment?

Hard to tell. If the eventual regulation does not affect fair use, then probably no significant impact. If the regulation actively impedes fair use, the consumer electronics industry as a whole will suffer.

Other Comments:

The evidence is that fair use turns to piracy when the retail cost of purchasing content is significantly higher than the cost (and effort) associated with copying. In other words, DRM is an effort by content distribution companies to maintain unreasonable levels of profit.